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Superintendent

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Reading Excellence Program Eligibility

The Montana Office of Public Instruction is required to make Local Reading Improvement (LRI) subgrants, on a competitive basis, to LEAs that meet one of the following criteria:

- Districts that have at least one school identified for school improvement under section 1116(c) of Title I, ESEA.
- The two districts with the largest or second largest number of children in the state counted for the Title I formula (census figures) under section 1124(c).
- The two districts with the highest or second highest poverty rate (using census figures) of school-age children in comparison to other LEAs in the state.

Once the LEA is determined to be eligible, the district may identify its eligible schools by using the following criteria:

- Any elementary school (containing grades K-3) that has been identified for school improvement under section 1116(c) of Title I, ESEA.
- The two elementary schools with the largest or second largest number of poor children according to the free and reduced lunch count.
- The two elementary schools with the highest or second highest percent of poverty using free and reduced lunch data.

Approximately 90% of Montana's grant award will flow to districts for local reading improvement. The attached list reflects the districts and schools that are eligible according to the most recent data available at OPI. Billings, Great Falls, and Butte School Districts should review the free and reduced lunch data for 2001-2002 to determine if changes to the schools listed are necessary. Contact Marsha Davis at 444-0793 or msdavis@state.mt.us to make corrections or to address any questions about the eligibility requirements.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction is also required to make at least one Tutorial Assistance subgrant (TAS), on a competitive basis, to LEAs that meet one of the criteria listed above plus LEAs that have at least one school located in an empowerment zone or enterprise community. In Montana, only the Fort Peck reservation has been designated as an enterprise community.

The Tutorial Assistance Subgrants fund tutorial assistance in reading to children enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 having difficulty in reading. TAS funds may be used to provide

tutoring assistance based on scientific research based reading instruction before or after school, on weekends, or during the summer. Tutoring providers must include a school-based program as well as at least **one independent provider** under contract to the LEA. The contract provider(s) must be independent, in the provision of these services, of any private school whose children are being served and any religious organization.

Eligible districts are required to provide public notice to potential providers of tutorial assistance and parents residing within their attendance area, regarding the availability of the Tutorial Assistance Grants within 30 days of the date of the Office of Public Instruction's letter notifying LEAs of the availability of Tutorial Assistance Subgrants. Applicants should plan for a starting date of no earlier than February 1, 2002.

Further information and technical assistance workshops will be provided to eligible districts later this fall and will include the latest reading research as well as details concerning the requirements of the grant, and the application process. All information will be posted to the OPI website at www.metnet.state.mt.us as soon as possible.

OPI Contact:

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